NAME: Tajima, Kengo DATE OF BIRTH: 1884 PLACE OF BIRTH: Gunma Project I.D. No. ~~28~~ 28-6
Age: 91 Sex: M Marital Status: W Education: College & Seminary

PRE-WAR:
Date of arrival in U.S.: Age: M.S. S Port of entry: Seattle
*Occupation/s: 1. Student/School Boy 2. Ranch Worker 3. School Teacher (Japan)
Place of residence: 1. San Francisco, Ca. 2. Los Angeles, Ca. 3. Japan (3 yrs)
Religious affiliation: Christian Church 4. San Francisco, Ca. 5. Salt Lake City, Utah 6. Pasadena, California
Community organizations/activities: * 4. Minister (Presbyterian)

EVACUATION:
Name of assembly center:
Name of relocation center: Gila River Camp, Arizona
Dispensation of property: Names of bank/s:
Jobs held in camp: 1. Hired Laborer 2.
Jobs held outside of camp: Minister (In Cleveland)
Left camp to go to: Cleveland, Ohio (In 1943)

POST-WAR:
Date returned to West Coast:
Address/es: 1. Cleveland, Ohio 2.
3.
Religious affiliation: Christian Church
Activities: 1. 2. 3.
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: Deceased

Name of interviewer: Heihachiro Takarabe Date: 6/1971 Place: San Anselmo, Ca.
Translator: H. Takarabe

Name: Kengo Tajima

Age: 91 years old

Birth Date: 1884

Birthplace: Gunma Ken

Major Occupation: Pastor (Presbyterian)

Relocation Camp: Gila

Interviewer: Heihachiro Takarabe
Interview Date: June, 1971
Place of Interview: San Anselmo, California

Translator: Heihachiro Takarabe
Typist: Jane Muramoto

NAME: KENGO TAJIMA

Q: Mr. Tajima, where were you born?

A: Gunmaken Shimamura

Q: When were you born?

A: 1884

Q: When you were in Japan, what kind of experiences did you have?

A: I remember the Sino-Japanese war which took place while I was attending grammar school. The next big memory would be the Russo-Japanese War, 1903-1904, when I was a high school student in Sendai, North Japan College.

Q: Have you noticed the gradual change in political situations?

A: I didn't notice so much then but later by reading I came to know the changes that Japan was going through all those years. Of course I didn't know as a grammar school boy what Russo-Japanese War meant, nor of Sino-Japanese War but of course I know now.

Q: What was the reason why you left Japan?

A: At a sort of precept of course for me, my high school and college education was Christian school in Sendai, North Japan college. This college consisted of three departments: futsuka, which meant grammar, I mean middle school and high school, then senmonka which meant college, not a full college grade but correspondence

college and among that there was a theological department. Of course I was set to be a minister when I was at grammar school, but I wanted to go for a higher education. But my father would not let me go. He said we are farmers, we a poor people, you can't go any higher; so I had to stay home for two years, after eight years of grammar school. During those two years, as I was born in a Christian home, and there was a little church in my village, my family would always be the center of a Christian movement. During those years we had a local pastor. Once in a while the preacher, regular pastor, would come from Tokyo or from Sendai and then administer the sacrament. One time there was an extended effort for spiritual revival and I sort of took the fire. Then I came across verse "Roman 12:1" educate yourself, "dedicate yourself." That struck me very deeply. Well, I spoke up; I professed my new discovered faith. Then the pastor from Sendai or from Tokyo told me "you become a minister," to which I jumped on. Why, because if I did, I could go to school. That's a good bargain for me. And even my father couldn't resist when I said I'm going to be a minister. He sent me to school. An arrangement was made for me to go to Sendai, because there I could study less expensively and it is a noted Japan college. I stayed there eight years, combining a high school and college course. When some boys would be named for the theological department, a few of us

would go directly to America, which I did. That's the reason I came to America.

Q: Where did you get the money to come to America?

A: Well it took 60 yen to cross the Pacific and I had to carry 100 yen just to show that I didn't want to be on public charge. That money I borrowed from my uncle. And sometime later after I came here I of course returned the money. B ut if you would like me to tell you how, in what way, for what motive most Japanese men came over to the States, there are two, three reasons: Of course Japanese people are mostly farming people, up to, well up to Taisho Era. How the Japanese farmers trail I didn't know at that time until I left the farm and found out, but the Japanese were of three classes: one small class of large land owners, whose land the tennants cultivated; landowner; and small tennants. Between them there were farmers who held small lands, all small mountain lands. That varied according to the locality. In 1936 I traveled through from Tokyo down to Yamaguchi and Kyushu. Traveling through on the road in Yamaguchi Ken there were large areas of rice fields but you didn't see farm houses, you saw small shacks here and there. Those were the dwellings of the tennants. The owner of the land lived in a large estate but you didn't see many of those. That was the low Yamaguchi Ken area. But other areas it was different. Most forced immigrants came from the class of small land owners. How they came to own the small land

I don't know. In feudal Japan all the land belonged to Daimyo and the people felt they tilled the land but they really didn't own it. After the Meiji Era came a class of small land owners.

I: That's what we call middle class people.

A: Middle class people, yes. Now many of our immigrants came from this class. The economical situation in our age was not steady by any means; there was always fluctuation. Many small land owners had difficulty. They came to the point they must lose the land; so in order to save the family situation these young men came over. They were mostly Chonan, youngest sons in the family. They had the responsibility so they came over. They came with the idea of staying in America for three years, save 1000 yen and then return and restore their family fortune. If they could, they did. Many immigrants came for that reason, and others came because they were the second and third sons in the family. Most of the family fortune would go to the eldest son, Jinan and Sannan. They could shift for themselves so they came too. That's one class. Then came another class of more educated young men to which I belonged. These young men were maybe one or two classes but one group came over after they had finished the Chugako or maybe some gakko above. They wanted to make more of a life so they came over. A good many of my friends, those who came from my college, came over for the same reason. My Christian school for many years did not have the

privilege of deferment from military service. Therefore, even if they didn't finish the Chugako, college course, at age 21 they had to go to the service. In order to avoid that, they came over to this country. Many of my alumni, even though they did not graduate, came over for this reason. Another reason is that there would not be much chance for them if they stayed in Japan, because the future of most educated young men would be going to government jobs. Tokyo University was especially built to produce government officers. Unless you went to the University of Tokyo and entered the law department and so forth, you did not have a chance. They went to government service or to big industries because government and big industries always tied up, you know, but for students in the Christian college there was not that kind of advancement. It was closed to them so they came to America. That's some of the reasons why my contemporaries came over to this country.

Q: When did you become a Christian?

A: I found out later that I was baptized January 24, 1889. I was four or five years old then. My father and one of my brothers were baptized the year before. That is the time when our family became a Christian family.

Q: How did they become Christians? You know, those who did.

A: Oh yes. You know Christianization of rural Japan came very slowly. There were one or two rural districts, one in Okayamaken, one in Gunmaken, which came under

Christian influence rather early in the Meiji Era. My village was one. There were missionaries from Tokyo and it's about that time when the church was started in Gunmaken Shimamura.

Q: Why did you choose America?

A: As I said, it was a natural place for me to go.

Q: How about the other people? Why America for the other immigrants?

A: Well, that was the only place for a Japanese immigrant to go.

Q: China?

A: China, no. The Japanese would look down on Chinese. They called them Chankoro. There's no chance in China.

Q: Before you left Japan, what did you think that America might be like?

A: I just idealized.

Q: Can you give us an example of your thoughts of America?

A: Well, of course, what I pictured was a missionary America.

I: Everybody was a missionary in America.

A: Well, I thought it was a Christian country.

Q: What was your impression when you first arrived in America?

A: Well, I arrived in Seattle then came down to San Francisco and walked on Market Street, and there were some people saying "Jap". Of course I knew there was already an anti-Japanese movement, so I wasn't very surprised.

Q: Did you go to school right away?

A: No, I worked for 6 months from January to September, then I spent one year in Los Angeles.

Q: What did you do?

A: I went to USC.

Q: I meant what kind of job did you have?

A: Schoolboy or going out to clean houses. There was a mission dormitory. The Methodist Church maintained the dormitory on Georgia Street and other boys there to clean house.

Q: Could you describe the things you did? What do you mean by houseboy (schoolboy)?

A: Schoolboy. You help the lady cook and you wash the dishes and so forth.

Q: How long did you work?

A: Well, I stayed in Los Angeles for one year.

Q: How many hours a day did you have to work as a schoolboy?

A: A regular schoolboy, there is no regular set up, but you have to wash dishes in the evening and you had to clean the house Saturday. Then you get $3 a week. I didn't make a successful schoolboy. I changed from place to place.

Q: Why is that?

A: In one place I took a bath. You know, went upstairs to the bath. Somehow this displeased the lady. She gave me a big washtub to wash. That time I didn't stay for more than a couple weeks.

Q: She didn't want you to use the same bathtub?

A: No. No, schoolboys didn't do that. They had to go to town for both bathouse or subway bathroom. Even in San Francisco you went to the barber to cut your hair, then you took a bath for 35 cents. The barber house always had a bath.

Q: Shower and everthing?

A: No, just bath.

Q: Regular bath?

A: 35 cents.

Q: Is that right? Can you recall any other things that happened as a schoolboy? Was the bath a bad experience?

A: No, not bad experience because I was able to communicate. I could speak enough English.

Q: Did you change places because of the bath incident?

A: No because I was not a good enough schoolboy. I didn't like the job either. If I didn't know English there would be all kinds of interesting incidents. Would you like to hear one?

I: Yes.

A: There was a boy in Seattle. After he landed in Seattle. After he landed in America, he got this job as a schoolboy and he was honest and hard working. The lady of the house liked him but he didn't know anything about the house work so she had to show him by taking his hand; do this and do that. He didn't know what for and maybe two, three days later the lady gave him a bath. She told him to go upstairs and take a bath, which he did. But he did it the Japanese way. He got

in the tub then he got out and soaped and washed up outside all over the floor so the lady had to come up and pull the boy into the bathtub again and that was the end of her patience. He had to go home and of course he knew why he had to go but he was very appreciative of what the lady did in those few days. He packed his suitcase and wanted to say goodbye. He wanted to express his appreciation but he didn't know how. He took out his Japanese-English dictionary, found out l-o-v-e, which said aisuru (to love) keiaisuru (respect). So he waited and when she came out he said, "I love you".

Q: How did the lady respond to that?

A: I guess she burst out.

Q: I wonder if she ever understood later that that was a Japanese custom of taking a bath?

A: That's a tradition and traditions don't go into detail.

Q: How did the white people treat you?

A: Oh, as long as you could express yourself in English, they understood you. I had no occasion of feeling bad so far. Once in Riverside I went into a barbershop, sat there, started to read a newspaper. While reading the barber came and said, "We don't serve you". Then I found out I wasn't wanted there so I went out. I didn't know that Japanese were not wanted.

Q: Did you go to the next barbershop?

A: I went to a Japanese barbershop. There were plenty of them.

Q: Did you have any other experiences like that?

A: Oh no. I stayed in Los Angeles for one year, then I went to other different cities.

Q: What good experience did you have with the white people? What did you appreciate most, the kind of instances when you really felt glad?

A: I never thought of it. I just took it for granted.

Q: You understood English well already when you came to America so you didn't have too much trouble communicating.

A: That's right. I think I spoke better English then.

Q: What kind of mistake did you make as a Japanese? Do you remember any?

A: There was no occasion to make mistakes.

Q: What is the saddest thing that happened to you?

A: I was working on a tomato ranch picking tomatoes with a bunch of Japanese Issei, older people, a hakujin boy and one older man who knew no English. This hakujin boy said some despising word against him. When I heard that I flared up. Right away I went to him and said, "He is my fellow countryman, he's my brother" or something. I almost beat him but the old man said you know he is only a boy. If you beat him you will be put in jail.

Q: What did the white boy say?

A: This young man just reproached him.

Q: After you talked to him, what did he do?

A: He left quietly. I left quietly too because an older Caucasian man said if you beat the boy you will be

Charged. I knew what I was doing.

Q: When did you graduate from the seminary?

A: 1913.

Q: Did you ever want to go back to Japan?

A: Well of course I thought about returning to Japan after my education was over. That's what I had in mind. I returned in 1917 and stayed there three years.

Q: What made you come back?

A: School teaching at Sendai wasn't exciting enough. There wasn't enough time to continue my study. What I had to teach was just elementary things. The school didn't want teachers to be very scholastic or academic. They just wanted to turn out local pastors. Academic things were not emphasized and I was dissatisfied with it.

Q: Had you ever thought of going back to Japan after that?

A: Well I thought of it after a few more years in America. I thought I would go back to Tokyo. There must be more exciting people. Well in San Francisco I was called. Reverend Hata came to me and said there is a place in Salt Lake City, will you go?

Q: What year was that?

A: 1921.

Q: So you went to Salt Lake City?

A: Yes.

Q: Would you tell us about the time when you got married? Did you go back to Japan? How did you meet her?

A: There was a pretty girl I had known for a number of years in Sendai. We were in the same church. We taught in the same Sunday School. Although we didn't have much chance to talk to each other, that was taboo, we saw each other, we knew. While I was in America I wrote to her for a couple of years and then I proposed to her.

Q: How old were you?

A: I was 29 when I married her.

Q: How old was she?

A: She was two years younger. I proposed to her and was engaged for two years. She came over in 1913.

Q: You didn't have to go after her?

A: No, no.

Q: How about your family? What did they say about it?

A: My father was glad. She was a Christian girl.

Q: Yet it was quite untraditional as far as Japanese customs are concerned. It was quite modern.

A: Well, not being the eldest son in the family.

Q: You didn't care?

Q: Did you have a middle man in all this?

A: Well of course I selected a nominal middle man.

Q: Out of all of this one can suppose it was completely unJapanese.

A: Yes, that's right.

Q: Then your wife came over here and she stayed here until she died, is that right?

A: That was 1913 and we went back in 1917 and I came back to America in 1920 in the spring. She and three children came after that year.

Q: Three children then were all born in this country?

A: Two children were born in this country and one born in Sendai.

Q: And they stayed with your wife?

A: Yes, they stayed with my wife in Tokyo for about one year.

Q: What do you know about the picture brides? Can you tell us stories about what you know?

A: There were a good many misfits and some spearations, but a good many couples stayed together. Most of them were married by picture arrangement. Yet they loved each other. They made good families. They stayed together because the women were trained that way.

Q: What kind of unhappy things happened? Can you give us some examples?

A: Oh yes, a good many. One dominant cause would be the difference in age. Men came 10 or 20 years earlier so when they got married they were in their 30's or 40's and the girls would be 20 or under. There was also a difference in education. A few men were chugako (middle school) graduates. Most of them were shogako (elementary school) graduates. Most of the girls went to the kotojogako (Junior high school) so the girls were always superior in education. That was another dissatisfaction on the part of women. They were not satisfied with their husbands. They were not good.

Q: What other difficulties? Do you know any instance where unhappy things happened?

A: No, there were few cases other than unfaithfulness. Very few on the part of women.

Q: Wasn't there though? Someone said that because of the age difference, young women were running away with younger men and there were wanted ads in the newspaper all over the place? Did young women run away with young men because of age differences?

A: There were a few cases, not very many.

Q: Is it true that these runaway women couldn't support themselves so they became prostitutes or geisha or barmaids?

A: Shakufu, not geisha. Yes in the big cities like San Francisco, Stockton, Sacramento areas. But looking back I say that the number of these women were comparatively few. How many? Twelve in San Francisco. Yes, twelve prostitutes at most.

Q: Many of the Issei have never really learned English. What do you think is the reason for this?

A: Well, there were no opportunities. Missions would maintain night schools and a few living in the cities and towns would go there. But most Japanese farmers were in the Fresno area. For these people there were no occasion. No arrangement was made for them to study English, and they could go on speaking Japanese, living in Japanese camps. There was no need for English.

I; Even if they didn't have formal study and learned identically, you could each learn conversation like any other immigrant. The Japanese like the Chinese are unique that way.

A: Yes, their only hope was that they would return to Japan very soon.

Q: Ruturn home? They were just temporarily living here?

A: Yes. Her money or her family name would go. That was the primary aim. There was no strong incentive.

Q: Before 1913 where were you?

A: I was in Berkeley, as a student.

Q: When did you buy your first house?

A: I bought my own house for the first time while in Cleveland in 1944.

Q: Did you have any difficulty buying a house?

A: No.

Q: War time?

A: Yes, war time.

Q: When you evacuated did you go to camp?

A: Yes, I was in hired labor; then went to Cleveland in 1943.

Q: 1924, this is the exclusion that came to be. Can you recall any incidence that might illustrate hardship of the Japanese?

A: All the years after 1924 there was exclusion, but if you wanted to, if you really worked hard, you could send for a wife. Those who didn't, either were not industrious enough or did not plan to stay in this

Country. Then 1934 came. I was in Utah, and there was Paul Waterhouse. He was a Congregational General Missionary for Japanese. Though he worked in California, he often came to Utah. I took him to the coal mines and other places. He talked about what he was doing at that time. He would go to Washington and would be there appointing lobbies. He interviewed the Congressmen trying to avert this final exclusion. He really worked hard. It was either the end of 1933 or early 1934 when Ambassador tanihara communicated with the Federal Government in Washington, "If you pass this law, exclusion law, there would be grave difficulties", which the Senators hopped on, saying Japan is threatening us. And Senator Lodge was the first to say "Let's pass the law because Japan is threatening us through his Ambassador". That was the most sad and undiplomatic thing he said. That may not be the final reason but that was the final occasion.

Q: Is that Lodge, Henry Cabot Lodge, Senator from Massachusetts?

A: Yes, that Senator.

I: They used that as an excuse, but they were going to pass it anyway, I think.

A: Maybe. It was a good excuse.

Q: Do you remember any Japanese man who suffered because of that?

A: Oh, there must have been those who wanted to and could work. Of course ministers could go. Some people, especially particular people could send for wives,

but their number was small.

Q: It was actually a psychological damage as far as that was concerned, not numerical.

A: That is a good excuse for anti-American people in Japan--Army and Navy people. They used those things. Good excuse, probably.

Q: Probably industrious men and those who wanted to were married by then, so it didn't really (as far as number of marriages is concerned) make too much difference. Am I right?

A: It did not make too much difference. Also more were married at that time.

Q: Where were you when the depression came in 1930?

A: Oh, in 1928 I was in Utah.

Q: Did you experience any difficulties?

A: No. I went to Utah in 1921, started to build a church in 1922-23 and some of my church people said this is a bad year, let's wait a couple of years until better times come, and so forth. But a Presbyterian officer from San Francisco came and the church building was started. It was time to start. So work can be started anytime, even in depression years.

Q: Did you work at a coal mine?

A: No, coal mines are in southern Utah. It is part of Japanese industry: coal mines, copper mines. People were farming around Salt Lake City. Ogden church had more farming people because of its location. I worked mostly in Salt Lake City with small merchants, farmers,

so forth; and I covered all the coal mining states. Railroad work is in what they call section. Every three or four miles there is a fixing house and a foreman with a good many Japanese and a number of Mexicans working as maintenance crews. Around Ogden, Evanston, and Lyndale, somewhere down from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles, there would be a station where railroad cars and engines were repaired. In those places a good many Japanese were working going round and round. Preaching was my secondary function. I was to get the money for the building. Salt Lake City is and will be the center for the Utah and Inter-mountain Japanese. It was handier to send sons and daughters to the university in Salt Lake City, so we wanted to maintain a good center, church and dormitories for the coming generation of Japanese men and women. One place I went to a man said, "well, when war starts between America and Japan you are free to come to our mission. You will be safer in a Christian church". I don't deny it. I accepted their contributions.

Q: Were you having regular worship services in the mines?

A: No, this is the way. I went to southern Utah. There were a number of mines where there were half a dozen or more camps. One boss maintained a camp for men. I went to one of those houses; etiher I prearranged it or I just went there without notide and I told them I would like to hold a meeting and she said "all right". The first thing I did in the camp was to go to the kitchen

to see the cook and greet him. He greeted all visitors--Christian pastors, Buddhists, "entertainers" and peddlers, and he treated us to a good dinner. He used to give you a big steak. Unless I ate it up he would say, "what's the matter, it's no good?" So I had to eat it all. Then the boys would come home from mines and take a bath and eat dinner. They would come to a common room where there were pool tables and a number of round tables. Some would start drinking beer, some would sit around the table and play cards. At about 8 p.m. they would say, "a Christian pastor is going to speak to us." So one table was cleaned up. The cards would be withdrawn and I would sing a few hymns by myself and then preach. Within one hour and a half they would all come back and start playing cards again.

Q: Do you know the kind of life the miners had?

A: Yes, they lived in banks or dormitories. They had a good place to sleep; always had good meals and they earned good money. Saturdays were paydays. Every Saturday they got their pay and Saturday was a chance for the townspeople to bring out all their wares, and so forth. Also big gamblers and prostitutes would come.

Q: Were prostitutes Japanese girls?

A: No, mostly Americans. There were all kinds, but one place I went there was a Japanese man who had a provision store and he had a hotel upstairs and I would stay there. The girl who took registrations was a prostitute. She would take your name down and say,

"don't you want me tonight?"

Q: What did you say? You didn't say no, did you?

A: I just laughed away. That was one kind. There must have been many others who would come out to those places in the evening. And there would be those who were going around, you know, section houses. I saw a man with a suitcase going around; he had strawberries and stockings. Those things were for the boys. That was all right. Then there would be women who would go from place to place selling flesh. That was a sort of challenge to me. If they could do that, I must go round and see my ware--the gospel.

Q: What kind of messages did you preach?

A: I don't remember. I still don't know what I was preaching. Sometimes I would hear the boys, you know, talking among themselves, "you ought to hear Reverend Tajima." I felt some sort of appreciation.

Q: What were you trying to do with them as far as your own objectives?

A: Well, I did person to person evangelism, but in the course of seven to eight years two families in the coal mines became Christians.

Q: Can you describe some other ways of their lives? Can you recall anything that might be helpful to us?

A: Well, sometimes I would talk with my boys.

Q: What kind of conversations would you have, not preach?

A: Well, we just talked about everyday things, things about Japan. Sometimes the boys would come to speak

of their own lives. One said, "I am such an unfortunate man, all my life one misfortune after another." I said, "How much are you earning now"? He said, "3000 every year." I said, "3,000 a year is good money. Very few men in Japan make as much as you do, aren't you lucky?"

Q: What did he say? Was he a bachelor?

A: Mostly.

Q: What kept them from going back to Japan?

A: Oh, they were just filling in their lot so to speak. They worked and spent their money; sort of gave up their original purpose for coming to the States. They just lived day by day. Gambling was prevalent and caused quarrels and shootings.

Q: The gamblers and bosses were Japanese too?

A: Yes. Quite often after those incidents the boys would be taken to court. Sometimes I interpreted for them. Sometimes the attorney or maybe judge didn't want to prolong judgment. If the court prolonged them much time and money were needed. They knew the man was guilty so they just shut him up. But that was not fair so if you consented to go for one year, they let you take that. So consenting to go to jail for one year would be the best way. Sometimes they got a harder judgment. One boy was sentenced to die. He was taken to the state penitentiary in Provo. I visited him and he was talking incoherently. I went back to the jailer and said, "this man is insane; examine him and sentence

him to the state mental hospital." So that saved him from the death chamber. A number of years later he was taken as a houseboy of the prison director. He worked in that family for quite a few years and became a forgotten man there. They lost their record of him so he could go free. But he lived there so many years and there is not much to do outside." I would like to stay in his house." So he stayed in that house until he died. He was at least saved from hanging.

Q: Life was simpler those days?

A: That is right. Another case happened in Salt Lake City. Two boys were working at a railroad station. One boy shot the other. The boy that was killed was a good, quiet man, very much liked by the community. The other boy had a bad reputation so he had no sympathy from the Salt Lake City Japanese community. He also was in a case, which he lost, involving liquor. He had a lawyer who helped him out of those cases. This lawyer, being a very poor one for a lwyer, defended him. However, in the first court he was sentenced to die. I knew the court was inadequate even for real criminals. It was a speedy judgment. I talked to the mine boys saying, "I am going to see this man gets more adequate judging and we need some money. Will you give some?" I think I got four or five hundred dollars. Then we wrote to his home in Japan. They sold his holdings for $1,500 and sent it to us. So we had about $2,000. We got the best criminal lawyer in Salt Lake City. He took the case and the court started again on the second day the judge found the evidence inadequate so the case was dropped.

Q: Well, he had very good legal aid.

A: But this boy became a church boy. He died a Christian man a couple of years later.

Q: Where were you when the war started between Japan and the U.S.?

A: In 1941 I was in Pasadena. I went back down to Pasadena in 1928 to Union Church there.

Q: And you stayed there till war started?

A: Fourteen years.

Q: How did you feel when the war started?

A: I, of course, felt very bad and very sad. My first reaction was how to protect our people, what to do with our people, that was the main concern. My reaction was for our people to take this incident with a clear understanding of what the war was, by, and for and how this war started. As for myself, I saw I didn't have much excuse on the side of Japan to start this war. Right or wrong it was started and we were in this country and our children are citizens; we were not citizens not of our own choice, but our loyalty and sympathy were with this country for our children and even for ourselves. We lived in this country for so many years, we owed what we had to this country so our duty was to defend this country at this time. I maintain that, and I said that which may be rather unpopular.

Q: Yes. Your talking about when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. What kind of things happened, what kind of events took place? There weren't any riots, but some kind of things must have happened?

A: That was Sunday and when I finished my Sunday morning service there was a radio broadcast and I think it was my boy.

Q: Which one?

A: Oh, my oldest boy was in Japan. Some of my children said, "war started." I communicated with my fellow pastors in Los Angeles and I called my friends in the Japanese Association in Pasadena and told them that war had started and that we should do something. He said they would be meeting that night and would I come to that meeting? I said I would but meanwhile I went to Los Angeles to talk to my fellow ministers. I came home and didn't go to the Japanese Association meeting. I was lucky I didn't. That same evening all the men in that Association meeting were rounded up.

Q: At the time, you know, I understand some of the Japanese ministers defended Japan, preaching that Japan had just cause in attacking America, trying to justify Japan's action. What made them do that?

A: I don't know. I never thought that way, but a good many of the ministers never thought that the Japanese would lose. They were very sure that Japan would win.

Q: Did you think so?

A: No, I never thought so. I knew better. (laugh)

Q: Do you remember any other things that happened when the news came? You talk as though it was a kind of expected thing. Were you upset at that time?

A: Yes. Well, of course I knew as a pastor I should do my best for the church people and the people in Pasadena. I didn't know what would be good for them. I even proposed to the city authorities that we Japanese would be willing to make use of this. I went so far thinking something would be good for the city and for the people too.

Q: When the U.S. Army Western Division sent you notice of relocation, you were still in Pasadena then. What was your feeling?

A: We had newspapers which told us that we would be in a mass exodus. We were expecting those things, so it came as no surprise.

Q: Was there any outburst or some kind of rebellion against this kind of thing?

A: No, nothing in Pasadena. Another thing we did right away was to have a meeting of interested church people in Pasadena. They met in a Pasadena chruch. They wanted to do something for the Japanese people. We talked about what the Japanese people should do. One thing the American Christians said they would do would be to call all the Japanese families in Pasadena and assure them their hearts were with them.

Q: What did the Japanese people think? Do you have any idea?

A: No, most Christian church people believed with me. There were no anti-American persons.

Q: How did the Caucasian church people respond to this

kind of thing?

A: Most pastors didn't take any action to prevent this exodus or removal, but they tried to think of ways to help us.

Q: What did they do?

A: They would come to the railroad station to say good-by; they furnished obento, so forth.

Q: Who furnished the obento?

A: The church people. That was probably all they could do. They didn't demonstrate. There was no positive action to prevent this mass evacuation or to protect us. A good many pastors met once in Los Angeles before the evacuation. Muriel Lester was there and we talked, mainly about what the Japanese ministers felt. We felt very pessimistic. We didn't have much to talk about.

Q: Now you went to the assembly centers; how long did you stay there?

A: Six months in the assembly center; six monthis in Arizona.

Q: As a prophet or as a pastor what kind of things did you feel you had to say to the people.

A: Well, I am no prophet. I didn't have these things to say, but I said we should cooperate as much as we can. Everything you know must be done patiently.

Q: Was there much conversion from Buddhism to Christianity in the camp?

A: I don't think so.

Q: There are positive effects and negative effects of camp life.

What did you think were the negative aspects of camp life? Can you give us an example?

A: One thing would be that many people just took it; even though within a year they were all fortunate enough to go out. If you went out further east you were fortunate. Enough people did go out. I said all of us could go out and should; but what percentage of people remained behind I don't know. However, a small percentage did go out. The rest remained there. They could have left easily.

Q:. What kind of events happened?

A: Where I stayed it was rather quiet, not very exciting.

Q: Can you give us small instances?

A: There was a patriotic pro-Japanese group. These active young people would propagate the pro-Japanese ideas and if I were more outspoken I might have angered them to do bodily harm to me. Everything went badly where I stayed. One time an army captain said the government would protect us as long as we obeyed, but if we did anything to the contrary the government would go against us. It was a clear-cut statement, a long lecture. I had to interpret for him. Later I found that the speech, the way I had interpreted it, was quite effective. It might have helped prevent an extreme rightist uprising.

Q: Was there a strong pro-American party?

A: No, pro-Americans were quiet people.

Q: The noisy ones were just pro-Japan. Did they do any harm, did they attack?

A: Not where I was in Gila, Arizona, but in other places there were incidents. Yamasaki, he was in Kentucky, he was attacked by the rightist. He was beaten.

Q: When you came to the relocation camp, when you saw the sight, when you moved into the house, how did you feel about that?

A: Well actually the housing was incomplete. I didn't take it very hard because I had gone through a hard life. So that didn't surprise me very much. One thing that was very bad was no provision for family privacy. Two families would be crowded in one big room. That was a very bad thing.

Q: If Japan attacked Pearl Harbor now, rather than 25 years ago, do you think the Japanese would go through camp like lost sheeps?

A: I think that could be possible, yes.

Q: The Japanese, now Nisei and Sansei, would behave exactly the same? The Negroes won't tolerate that kind of treatment but Nihogin are a little bit different. Do you think some very obedient somebody would fight and take it to court?

A: Of course they would. They know the way now.

Q: Legal way now?

A: Yes, that's right.

Q: But do you think they will do it because you know?

A: Yes, they will do it; they should do it. The government might try to do that because they have the set up, they have the camp ready. They have the roads which they can use you know, so the government might try that.

Q: When the Japanese were put together in one location and they

were so close together, obviously they would have family problems. (This child hit my child.) Were there many problems of this type?

A: Not so much.

Q:. It didn't matter much?

A: No, it didn't matter much.

Q: Were there any sad events "Jiken"?

A: Yes, I had to deal with one case of adultery in my camp, one married woman going with another married man.

Q: Did everyone in the camp know about the adultery?

A: Of course they found out, and the couple were moved out of the camp by the authorities.

Q: For adultery?

A: Yes, but they didn't prosecute the case. It would be a long process.

Q: The defendant didn't really file suit?

A: No, the defendant, the husband of this woman, was a weak character so he just followed it. They separated later.

Q: Isn't it true the typical Japanese can't cope with it when something like that happens? Instead of fighting it out in court, they just take it and internalize. They don't do anything about it, just sit there.

A: Not every case but that was what happened here.

Q: Were there any cases where the husband or wife filed suit?

A: Not that I knew. Of course the husband could kill the other one right away if he saw the action.

Q: Is that right?

A: Yes, kill him right away and get away, but he wasn't that kind of strong character.

I: But you know a situation like that, especially in camp, everything is abnormal. That's not a normal way of living. That's why a thing like this can happen. I think people can't think straight in this type of situation; so it is better not to have that type of situation. I don't want to blame anybody for doing something in the camp. If they were in a normal community they wouldn't be doing anything like that. You know war time, war situations, a lot of people kill somebody--that's war. A war situation is abnormal. In camp, too, everything being done was with a different kind of understanding. There was no hope among the people in the camp, right?

A: Their minds were not active either in a good way or in a bad way. Dormant so to speak.

I: No, you can't judge this situation in a normal way. As a Japanese how did you feel about being locked up within barbed wires? You know, although you are an American citizen, you have pride in the fact that you are a descendant of the Japanese.

A: Well my primary idea was that I was a pastor and should do the best thing for the people to be reconciled to their situation and to do their best under the circumstances. I always tried to see the good side, the light side of things.

Q: You didn't feel shikata ga nai?

A: No shikata ga nai, but I should do the best under the circumstances and see the good side even though there would be soldiers guarding the camp. One of the boys, rude boy, would run out of the wire fence to the store across the street to buy things. A soldier who was there to prevent

such things just took the child and carried him across the street to the store. It was a beautiful thing for him to do.

Q: Can you tell us about any other memorable things that happened in the camp?

A: Well there were a good many matching and marrying in the camp. I would always bless them and soon they would go out. They could get married and stay in the camp but they would go out.

Q: When they got married in camp were they allowed to have new quarters?

A: Oh yes, they had a sort of honeymoon room.

Q: Was there any special cemetery? People must have died. How did they dispose of the dead?

A: I don't know what happened in Gila. When I was in there, there was just one death. One young man who belonged to our church died. I think he was taken back to Pasadena and buried there. That's what I remember. But in other camps, lower in Kentucky, I think there was a quiet cemetery set up there. It's still there. Every year the Buddhist people would go there to perform memorial services.

Q: After camp, after prison, as a Japanese what kind of things have you experienced, the kind of things that are outstanding in your mind, whether it was a bad thing, the kind of events, "jiken," happening in the church or in your life or among your friends' lives?

A: When I went out of camp I took a job right away and started earning a living for myself. About the same time in Cleveland there were other people becoming Christians who wanted to have religious services. Right away we rented a room in a hakujin church and started meeting. It grew into a prominent church organization, which is still there. So I was busy with that sort of thing. Of course there were deaths and other sad things, but those are the things that come in life naturally. A number of things struck me as particularly tragic.

Q: Can you tell us about it?

A: No, there is nothing that I can tell. They were all things that you naturally had to take, helping people in situations. In Cleveland there was a China Town and I found out that our people were beginning to go there to gamble. Then I found out that the gambling was accepted and overlooked by the city authorities. It's Chinese trade. They have to do it. That was the attitude of the city authorities toward the Chinese people; and I said it's all right but if our people begin to suffer as they did in California, that is something I shouldn't overlook. I went to the church federation and said, "I want you to stop that. Go to the city authorities, remind them of these things". The federation secretary didn't take it seriously. "You go talk with them yourself." If I did take that way to them, I would be shot by the Chinese people. But that was the attitude of the church people at that time. I was disappointed.

Q: Were the hakujin people in general in Cleveland good?

A: Oh they were good.

Q: Did you have anthing like that happen in Pasadena?

A: No, to my knowledge we were not very significant in Pasadena. We were gardeners. Gardeners are convenient in every way so they just took us kindly. There was nothing important about the Japanese people. We weren't taken into account either for good or bad.

Q: You are now probably one of the older Isseis. If you had three things to say to the people, what would you tell them?

A: I have ten grandchildren. I enjoy them.

Q: That's because you have exceptionally good grandchildren. I tend to idealize Sanseis more than Niseis. If you think there is something lacking in the Sansei, what do you think it is?

A: Well, I would say in the large sense, a man should have historical faith. A man with no historical faith would be a tragic case. You should have historical faith, that is not only in the history of the old people, but particularly the history of our various backgrounds. Your background, you should know. For that reason you should try to know the culture that is behind you. But at the same time remember that the culture behind you is a hidden culture, the culture that has developed with the right kind of belief in God. The culture that grew, that is always different from the culture that is with the right kind of faith, Christian faith. You should always try to see the distinction between them. So as you study

your ancestoral culture, bear in mind that distinction. I would also say to all the young people going to school, "Whatever you do, English is a very important thing. If you go to humanities or science or anything, English is very fundamental. Take enougn time to master your English." I would say that.

I: Well I think you must be tired. You spoke two hours continuously.

A: I never came under such scrutiny.

I: Thank you very much.